Providing shelther to shelterless rural poor

3679. DR. RADHAKANT NAYAK: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the number of shelterless rural poor of the country; and

(b) if so, what steps Government is taking to provide shelter to these poor people within a stipulated time; and to build Indira Awas Yojana for the SCs/STs, who happen to be the poorest of the poor and are almost entirely shelterless in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) and (b) Requirement of houses for the Below Poverty Line (BPL) families of rural areas is estimated on the basis of the data made available in the Office in the Registrar General of India. As per Census 2001, the housing shortage in rural areas is about 148.33 lakh. Under Indira Awas Yojana, financial assistance is provided for construction of houses to the shelterless BPL families in the rural areas since 1985-86. Initially, the Scheme was only for BPL families belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The benefit of the scheme has been extended to other BPL households of rural areas from 1993-1994. At present minimum 60% of the funds are utilized for SCs/STs rural poor and upto 40% for other BPL rural families. The selection of beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana is made from Below the Poverty Line (BPL) rural families with the approval of Gram Sabha.

Setting up of knowledge centres in every village

†3680. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH:
SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up a knowledge centre in every village of the country before the 60th Anniversary of Independence Day, if so, the details thereof and the facilities to be offered by the knowledge centres;

(b) the number of villages covered under the scheme so far, State-wise;

(c) whether it is feasible to set up knowledge centres in such a short time; and

(d) if so, the number of villages to be covered by the scheme before target date, State-wise?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) No, Sir. The Ministry of Rural Development has no proposal at present to set up a knowledge centre in every village of the country before the 60th anniversary of Independence Day.

(b) to (d) Questions do not arise.

Rural Development Project

3681. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware about the Rural Development Project launched to provide basic access to people of rural areas as part of the poverty-reduction strategy, through construction of good quality long-standing roads with high engineering standards;

(b) if so, by when this project would be completed;

(c) whether the State Governments, through which this project is being executed, are utilising the funds released and laying the roads of the requisite standard; and

(d) whether the monitoring agencies satisfied with the progress towards completion of the project on time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) and (b) The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) seeks to provide connectivity to all Unconnected Habitations in the rural areas of the country, with a population of more than 500 persons, through good All-weather roads, by the end of the Tenth Plan period. In respect of the Hill States (North-East, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttaranchal), Desert areas and Tribal (Schedule-V) areas, the objective is to connect Habitations with a population of 250 persons and above.

(c) Yes, Sir. Road works under PMGSY are built to specifications given in the Book of Specifications for Rural Roads and the Rural Roads Manual published by the Indian Roads Congress.

(d) Though the programme goal is to connect the eligible Habitations by the end of the Tenth Plan period, the completion of the programme as per the laid down time schedule depends on annual budgetary allocations.